

AMENDED IN SENATE FEBRUARY 23, 2006

Senate Concurrent Resolution

No. 77

Introduced by Senator Alquist
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Jones)

January 19, 2006

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 77—Relative to Lymphedema Awareness Day.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 77, as amended, Alquist. Lymphedema Awareness Day.

This measure would declare ~~October 15~~ *March 6*, 2006, to be Lymphedema Awareness Day.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Lymphedema is a serious chronic disease that
2 plagues thousands of Californians who are either born with the
3 condition, or who develop it as a result of trauma, surgical insult,
4 radiation therapy, or a combination of these factors; and
5 WHEREAS, Ninety percent of Lymphedema cases are the
6 result of trauma or medical treatment; and
7 WHEREAS, The remaining 10 percent result from congenital
8 defects of the lymph system; and
9 WHEREAS, Several thousand Californians will be put at risk
10 or will develop Lymphedema each year as a consequence of
11 cancer treatment, surgical insult, or physical trauma; and
12 WHEREAS, Lymphedema is the chronic accumulation of
13 fluid in an affected limb, trunk, breast, or face; and
14 WHEREAS, Without professional treatment and self-care this
15 accumulation results in the gross distention of the lymph-filled

1 body part and chronic infections that can become life-threatening
2 lacking prompt treatment; and

3 WHEREAS, Lymphedema often leaves its victims disfigured,
4 as well as physically and emotionally disabled; and

5 WHEREAS, Many Lymphedema patients are breast cancer
6 survivors who have undergone surgery, lymph node removal,
7 often in combination with subsequent radiation therapy.
8 However, similar treatments for colon cancer, melanoma, and
9 uterine, ovarian, and cervical cancer can also cause
10 Lymphedema; and

11 WHEREAS, This condition is often ignored or trivialized by
12 many in the medical community because it is incurable and
13 requires lifetime surveillance and treatment that may not always
14 be known by the medical professional; and

15 WHEREAS, Persons at risk for Lymphedema must apply a
16 regimen of self-care to prevent or delay the onset of symptoms
17 that is nearly as rigorous as self-care requirements for patients
18 already afflicted with Lymphedema; and

19 WHEREAS, Despite the fact that Lymphedema's presence
20 appears to be increasing, particularly with reference to
21 treatment-induced Lymphedema, much of the medical
22 community fails to acknowledge the need for prompt and timely
23 diagnoses and treatment; and

24 WHEREAS, At present, many persons are denied coverage for
25 Lymphedema because their health care plans do not recognize
26 Lymphedema as an incurable disease; and

27 WHEREAS, Instead, it is treated as a physical disability that
28 requires rehabilitation rather than treatment; and

29 WHEREAS, The cost of medically necessary bandages and
30 compression garments is passed on to the patient because these
31 necessities are termed "durable medical equipment"; and

32 WHEREAS, Many Lymphedema patients are denied
33 reimbursement for their paraphernalia without which
34 uncontrolled swelling and life-threatening infections may occur;
35 and

36 WHEREAS, Timely diagnosis and treatment is often not
37 available to patients, particularly those in rural areas, making
38 Lymphedema more difficult to manage with more negative
39 health consequences due delays in diagnosing and treating the
40 condition; now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
2 *thereof concurring,* That the Legislature declares ~~October 15~~
3 *March 6, 2006,* to be Lymphedema Awareness Day; and be it
4 further
5 *Resolved,* That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
6 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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